# THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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## INDIAN REPRESENTATION CONFIRMED AT OSCARS 2025 AS *ANUJA* GETS NOD

**_Anuja_, a short film set in New Delhi, bagged a nomination in the Live Action Short category at the 97th Academy Awards on Thursday**

### *A LIEN, I'M NOT A ROBOT* AMONG COMPETITORS

*Anuja* tells the story of a gifted nine-year-old, who must make a choice between education and factory work. Directed by Adam J Graves and Suchitra Mattai, the film stars Sajda Pathan and Ananya Shanbhag. Other nominees for the Live Action Short category are: *A Lien*, *I'm Not a Robot*, *The Last Ranger*, and *The Man Who Could Not Remain Silent*

### *MONGA, PRIYANKA* EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

- *Anuja* has two-time Oscar winning producer Guneet Monga on board as executive producer. Recently, actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas also boarded the project as an executive producer
- The film is produced by NGO Salaam Baalak Trust, which supports street children, along with Shine Global, and Krushan Naik Films

March 2

**WHEN THE 2025 ACADEMY AWARDS CEREMONY WILL BE HELD IN LOS ANGELES**


CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

# Siddu gets clean chit in BTC steward nomination case

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

IN a big relief to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, the special court to try criminal cases against sitting and former MPs/MLAs has accepted the closure report filed by the Lokayukta police.

The court said, "There was no act of quid pro quo" against Siddaramaiah in the case in which he was accused of receiving Rs 1.30 crore for nominating a steward for Bangalore Turf Club (BTC).

The other reason given by the Lokayukta police for filing the 'B' (closure) report is lack of material to proceed against Siddaramaiah, accused No 1 in the case, and L Vivekananda aka Kings Court Vivek from Mysuru, accused No 2, as complainant NR Ramesh did not appear before the investigation officer (IO).

"Though records indicate that Siddaramaiah received Rs 1.30 crore from Vivekananda, the same cannot be held to be an act of quid pro quo towards his nomination as steward of BTC," Judge Santhosh Gajanan Bhat said in his order while accepting the 'B' report filed on September 12, 2024.

Alleging that Siddaramaiah, by abusing his position as CM, received Rs 1.30 crore by way of a cheque on July 28, 2014, for nominating Vivekananda as the steward, Ramesh filed a private petition with the special court when the Lokayukta police did not act on his complaint.

In June 2024, the special court rejected the closure report as the Lokayukta police did not adhere to the principles of natural justice and ordered a preliminary investigation. After this, the Lokayukta police filed a 'B' report again.

CONTINUED ON: P4

### Unaware of clean chit to me in MUDA case: CM

Bengaluru: Even as opposition BJP slammed the Lokayukta police for reportedly giving a clean chit to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his wife BM Parvathy in MUDA (Mysuru Urban Development Authority) case, the CM on Thursday clarified that he was unaware of it. The high court, which will hear an appeal by RTI activist Snehamayi Krishna to hand over the case to CBI for investigation on January 27, had instructed the Lokayukta police to submit its investigation report by then. "I don't know about it," Siddaramaiah quipped, responding to the buzz in a section of the media about the Lokayukta police giving a clean chit to him and his family members in the MUDA case. ENS

# 5,300 YRS AGO

## IRON AGE BEGAN ON TAMIL SOIL, SAYS STALIN, CITES SCIENTIFIC PROOF

T MURUGANANDHAM @ Chennai

TAMIL NADU Chief Minister M K Stalin on Thursday, based on the results of scientific dating of archaeological samples, declared that iron was used in the present Tamil-speaking region even in the mid third to fourth millennia, thereby pushing the Iron Age period back by around two millennia. The results establish that iron was used in the region over 5,300 years ago, he said.

Releasing the report titled, 'Antiquity of Iron: Recent Radiometric Dates from Tamil Nadu' in Chennai, Stalin said he was making the remarkable anthropological announcement, not only to India but to the whole world, that the "Iron Age began on Tamil soil".

The results were based on samples sent from various archaeological sites including Sivagalai in Thoothukudi district, Adichanallur in Tirunelveli district, Mayiladumparai in Krishnagiri district to three renowned laboratories — Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences, Lucknow; Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad; and Beta Analytic Lab, Florida, USA.

While the samples were sent to Indian labs for Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) analysis, the samples from the same sites were sent for radiometric analysis to the Beta Analytic Lab in Florida. Similar results have been received from all the three labs.

Stalin said the state's Archaeology Department has established through chronometric dating that smelting technology to extract iron from ore was first introduced in the Tamil landscape. "This is a pride for the Tamil race, Tamil Nadu and the Tamil landscape," the CM said.

CURRENT GLOBAL CONSENSUS REGARDING
IRON AGE
Iron metal production from ore is believed to have begun in the mid-2nd millennium BCE. Iron Age is so far believed to have started in Anatolia and the Caucasus around late 2nd millennium BCE (~1300 BCE), with the transition occurring in the Ancient Near East during the 12th century BCE (1200–1100 BCE)
SITES AND SAMPLES SENT
1 Sivagalai (Thoothukudi): Charcoal samples collected from urn burials with iron objects in the habitation mound called Valappalanpillai-thiradu. Three samples have been dated to 2953 BCE, 3259 BCE and 3345 BCE
2 Adichanallur (Tirunelveli): Samples associated with an iron object were dated to 2517-2513 BCE
3 Mayiladumparai (Krishnagiri): Samples of iron objects dated to 2172 BCE
4 Mangadu (Thelunganur) in Salem: Iron sword dating back to 1263 BCE found
5 Kilnamandi (Tiruvannamalai): Age of iron objects found in the site falls between 1769 BCE and 1615 BCE
IRON AGE PERIOD IN VARIOUS REGIONS
900 BCE in China
800 BCE in Central and Western Europe
600 BCE in Northern Europe
500 BCE in Northern Scandinavian Europe
WHAT DO THE NEW FINDINGS IN TN SAY?
Samples discovered from various archaeological sites in Tamil Nadu, which were sent for dating, have revealed that iron objects found here dated to 3345 BCE and 2172 BCE. This pushes the current Iron Age period back by at least around two millennia
WHERE WERE THE SAMPLES TESTED? Birbal Sahani Institute of Palaeosciences, Lucknow; Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad & Beta Analytic, Florida, USA

Aerial view of Iron Age graves at Mayiladumparai

# 14 held for vandalising unisex salon in M'luru

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mangaluru

MANGALURU police arrested 14 people, including Prasad Attavar, a rowdy sheeter and prime accused in the infamous Amnesia Pub attack of 2009, for allegedly vandalising a unisex salon near KSRTC bus stand at Bejai here on Thursday, accusing its owner of running a flesh trade.

The other arrested have been identified as Harshraj, Mohan Das, Purandara, Sachin, Ravish, Suketh, Ankit, Kali Muttu, Abhilash, Deepak, Vignesh, Pradeep Poojari, and Sharan Raj, a video journalist.

In a video, the accused, who claimed allegiance to little known Rama Sene, are seen intimidating and accusing women employees of the salon of indulging in immoral activities. They destroyed furniture and other equipment even as terrified employees pleaded with them not to break them.

Meanwhile, Sudheer Shetty, owner of the salon and a resident of Anegundi near Bejai, denied any illegal activities on his premises.

**Amnesia Pub attack accused held**

Prasad Attavar, a rowdy sheeter and prime accused in the Amnesia Pub attack in 2009, among the arrested

Mangaluru city police commissioner Anupam Agrawal said the incident took place around 11.51am. A group barged into the salon and damaged furniture and other equipment.

"They verbally abused the women employees and accused them of indulging in immoral activities. They also assaulted two staffers. One of the intruders was seen recording the incident on his mobile phone. A case has been registered at Barke police station based on a complaint from the saloon owner," the commissioner said.

Home Minister G Parameshwara, who was in Udupi, condemned the incident and said, "If any illegal activities had taken place in the saloon, the accused should have filed a police complaint. Nobody should take law into their hands."

APPLE GLITCH

## Notices to Ola, Uber over price disparity

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Union government has issued notices to Ola and Uber over complaints that they were charging different prices from customers depending on whether the booking was from an iPhone or an Android smartphone.

The notices were issued by the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), a regulatory body under the Union consumer affairs ministry.

"As a follow-up to the earlier observation of apparent differential pricing based on the different models of mobiles (iPhones/ Android) being used, Department of Consumer Affairs through the CCPA, has issued notices to major cab aggregators Ola and Uber, seeking their responses," said Prakhar Joshi, Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution & New and Renewable Energy, on X.

An Uber spokesperson said the platform does not set prices based on the operating system of the consumer's phone. Ola is yet to comment.

The development comes after a large number of consumers pointed out that the ride-hailing apps were showing higher prices on iPhones compared to Android smartphones.

express read

### Udupi man tests Mpox +ve, first case this year

Mangaluru: A case of Mpox has been reported in Udupi after a 40-year-old man tested positive for the virus. The patient arrived in Mangaluru from Dubai on January 17. This is the first case of Monkeypox reported in the state this year. P3

### TG bags investments worth Rs 1.78 lakh crore

Hyderabad: The Telangana govt signed investment commitments worth Rs 1,78,950 crore at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, which concluded on Thursday. The biggest individual proposals include Rs 60,000 crore from the Amazon Web Services. P5

WITH THIS ISSUE

CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE INDULGE 40 PAGES, INCLUDING 24 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)

# RGV gets jail in cheque bounce case

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

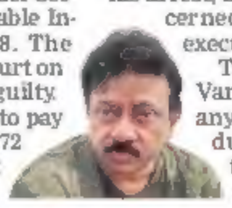
A Mumbai court convicted filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma and sentenced him to three months of simple imprisonment in a seven-year-old cheque bounce case.

A company, Shree, represented by Maheshchandra Mishra, had filed a case against Ram Gopal Varma's firm under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act in 2018. The Andheri Magistrate Court on Tuesday found Varma guilty.

Varma was directed to pay a compensation of ₹3.72 lakh to the complainant within three months, failing which he will face another three months of imprisonment.

The filmmaker has faced financial troubles in recent years, which was exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic when he had to sell his office.

As Varma was absent during the proceedings, the court issued a non-bailable warrant for his arrest, instructing the concerned police station to execute the sentence.



The court said since Varma had not spent any time in custody during the trial, there was no provision for a set-off for him under Section 428 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

For his part, Varma took to social media, stating that the case relates to a cheque of ₹2,38,000 from a former employee. He emphasised that his legal team is addressing the matter, adding he didn't want to make any further comment.

Known for his blockbusters such as *Rangeela*, *Satya*, *Company*, *Bhoot*, *Sarkar* and *Kaun*, Ram Gopal Varma is a significant figure in the Indian film industry. In June 2022, he was granted bail after furnishing a personal bond and cash security of ₹5,000.

# Study challenges stigma, props livelihood, social inclusion of mentally ill

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

AN eye-opening, first-of-its-kind study has revealed that targeted support for self-employment enabled financial independence and social inclusion among those with severe mental illness in rural communities.

The study by Live Love Laugh Foundation (LiveLoveLaugh) and researchers from the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), published on December 31, 2024 in the peer-reviewed International Journal of Social Psychiatry, challenges long-held misconceptions and stigma attached to mental illness, and offers preliminary evidence that persons with severe mental illness can build independent livelihoods through self-employment when offered free treatment and support locally.

Conducted over a period of 10 months in Jagaluru taluk, of Karnataka's Davangere district, the study focused on outcomes of a Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programme facilitating self-employment opportunities through a one-time grant from LiveLoveLaugh, managed as a revolving fund by a family-led federation. Participants engaged in locally relevant livelihood activities such as sheep-rearing and tailoring, that are sustainable.

Of the 214 people availing CBR, 98 consented to participate in the study, aged 18-50 years.

The study — titled "Outcome of wage and self-employment intervention for persons with severe mental illness availing rural community-based rehabilitation project: Experience from South India" — found that persons with severe mental illness demonstrated financial reliability, with three out of ten families fully repaying their loans and others showing strong commitment despite challenges. Employment was found to enhance dignity, purpose and social acceptance while reducing stigma and promoting recovery. Ventures such as sheep rearing and tailoring provided financial relief and a sense of belonging.

Moreover, the program helped beneficiaries to generate earnings to support their livelihood while also increasing community engagement. P5


MARUTI

CARS TO COST MORE FROM FEBRUARY 1

Maruti Suzuki India will hike prices by up to ₹32,500 across various models from February 1 to partially offset the rise in input cost. "We are constrained to pass on some of the increased expenses to the market," it said in a statement | P13